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is IPLA?

P.L. 221

Creating a School Improvement Team

The Perceptions of a Veteran
Principal on Public Law 221

By Al Logsdon, Principal
Heritage Hills High School



IC 20-10.2-3-1

Effective 7-1-2001 . Sec. 1 The principal of each school must coordinate the development of an initial three (3) year strategic and continuous school improvement and achievement plan and coordinate annual review of the plan. The initial plan and annual review must be made with input from a committee of persons interested in the school, including administrators, teachers, parents, and community and business leaders appointed by the principal. Teacher appointments to the committee must be made in accordance with IC 20-7.5-1.

As added by P.L. 221-1999, SEC. 13.

Public Law 221 requires each building principal to appoint a committee of persons interested in the school, including administrators, teachers, parents and community leaders, to develop the initial three year plan and conduct an annual review. Utilizing the talents of such a diverse group will provide the school principal opportunities to deal with a unique combination of challenges and successes.

School administrators should spend a great deal of time analyzing the potential that each appointee brings to this committee and determine how they will support the task of creating a viable school improvement plan. At the initial meeting of this committee, it is imperative that a vision for school improvement be developed and that everyone comprehends his/her role in creating an optimum learning environment for all students. P.L. 221 states that the principal shall serve as the chairperson for this committee, and it will be his/her major responsibility to ensure all members have the skills necessary to contribute effectively.

The principal must utilize techniques necessary to conduct effective meetings and ensure that all members of this group have the opportunity to provide input into the decision making process. It is imperative that members be trained in conflict resolution and consensus building. Keeping everyone aware of the actions of a committee is another desired outcome of an effective meeting. Publishing and sharing minutes of all meetings will facilitate communication between the school improvement team and other teachers, the superintendent, and school board members.

A major task for committee members will be learning how to gather and analyze school data. In many instances, educators and other members of the committee are not accustomed to utilizing multiple sources of data to address learning issues. Using a model such as Victoria Bernhardt's for gathering data on student learning, demographics, school processes and perceptions of the learning environment will yield well informed decisions. These decisions will lead to the development of the major school improvement goals.

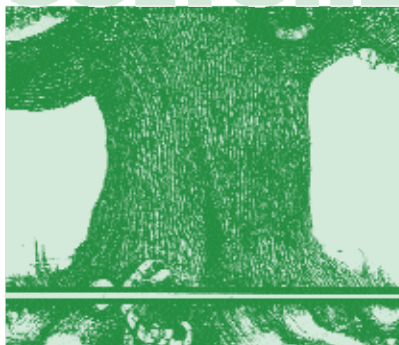
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Retire or Refire?

By Robert Dalton, Deputy Superintendent
Indiana Department of Education - Retired!

CULTURE



As retirement approaches for many educators in the State of Indiana and the thought of not getting out of bed at 3:00 AM on snow days to check weather conditions or

participating in collective bargaining seem like an appealing idea, might I suggest that you analyze whether you are going to retire or refire.

To obtain some thoughts on retirement, I turned to my trusty computer and entered the word "retirement" into a search engine. The

result was 240 web sites providing a variety of ideas on the topic. Of those sites, 99.9% offered information on how to improve your financial future in retirement simply by tapping a key. Although these would be great sources of information for those some years away from the graduation to the exalted state of retirement, this was not what I was looking for.

Left to my own ideas about retirement, I have created a list for the retiring educator. Each retiree must ask themselves, what they want to accomplish during these golden years. Are you going to sit around and spend many years doing nothing? Although this might sound appealing, I view retirement as a time to refire - to regenerate many areas in your life including new hobbies, community involvement, or experiencing a new side to life.

Those who serve in the teaching profession live and work in a relatively well organized environment that relies on tremendous energy and careful planning. This experience can serve you well in retirement because it is that organization and energy which will allow you to refire your life. With retirement coming at an earlier age for many, continued work is a desirable alternative on either a full-time or part-time basis. This might be in the public or private sector. Consider the possible directions that you can now take in life.

- Teach at college/university level
- Become a consultant
- Travel to the places you have always dreamed of
- Start a new hobby
- Volunteer as a reader or reading instructor
- Serve in a community organization, service organization, or church group
- Become a School Board member in your community

**"Make the most of today and
the tomorrows that you are
afforded by re-firing not retiring"**

Refire important personal relationships that may have inadvertently taken a back seat during your working life. Taking time to strengthen family relationships, support children in their endeavors, enjoy grandchildren, and make new friends and acquaintances. Your refired life will keep you truly alive every day that you live.

It is true that, "The more you lose yourself in something bigger than yourself, the more energy you will have." Make the most of today and the tomorrows that you are afforded by re-firing not retiring!

The Facts on Indiana Administrators

FACT

The number of Indiana school administrators has increased for the past five years.

FACT

The number of principal and superintendent licenses issued each year has declined steadily over the past ten years.

FACT

The majority of Indiana schools are located in small town, rural, and mid-size central city locales.

FACT

Approximately 35% of Indiana school administrators, principals and superintendents, are female.

FACT

There was approximately a 14.7% turnover rate in the principal and assistant principal positions between the 99-00 and the 00-01 school years.

FACT

89% of Indiana school administrators are Caucasian.

FACT

The average salary of an Indiana principal is \$68,765.00.

**This data has been compiled from the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Professional Standards Board, and the Indiana School Boards Association.*



How are Principals Supported with P.L. 221?

One Superintendent's Perspective

By Robert L. Molnar, Superintendent
Southwestern Consolidated School District of Shelby County

If continuous improvement is the goal, then superintendents cannot abrogate their responsibility for providing guidance or direction in implementing P.L. 221. The process of continuous improvement must take place within a framework that ensures continuity along with aligned acts of improvement. The superintendent along with his/her cabinet and board should be instrumental in developing the framework that schools employ their Strategic and Continuous School Improvement and Achievement Plans.

What then, are some things a superintendent can do to support building administrators in the development of school improvement plans?

COMMUNICATE

Continue or start to have regular conversations about P.L. 221, its components and its implications. Include dialogue about what continuous improvement means to your corporation -- give it a life. Our communication should have a depth to it that explores the very way we do business and how we communicate with each other. Begin to develop lines of communication throughout the system that support continuous improvement, so students moving through the system are not short-changed. As we flatten out the system from top to bottom it becomes more imperative we employ effective communication skills. This communication should include the development or validation of the system's mission, beliefs and values.

ALIGN

It is just as difficult for individuals as well as organizations to be "all things to all people," so we must focus on those things that need immediate attention while tending to those things that keep the ship afloat. This may mean we stop doing something that has been successful in the past. A question that we can begin to ask ourselves is, "Does this activity, procedure or process contribute, support or align with our mission and vision?" If our answer is "no" then we need to redirect or reallocate our resources to focus more directly on what we have identified as important.

Our alignment should not be limited to just classroom or curriculum activities, but should include all aspects of the organization, i.e., food service, transportation, maintenance and business. A superintendent can influence these areas which many times have their roots in the central office.

"It (Continuous Improvement) will live or die by the energies associated with those who have ownership in the process and accountability for the results."

P.L. 221 states the superintendent "shall review the plan to ensure that the plan aligns with the school corporation's objectives, goals and expectations." Superintendents should be developing broad based goals with their boards from stakeholder data, thus enabling the building level school improvement teams to align their expectations.

Alignment should not only be between the school building and central office, but from building to building as well. Superintendents should encourage and facilitate meetings between buildings and school improvement teams to ensure the continuation of successful practices, so that a seamless approach to continuous improvement is developed corporation-wide.

Alignment underlines the importance of communication in the process of continuous improvement.

CHALLENGE THE CURRENT MINDSET

I believe the answers to continuous improvement lie within ourselves, but not necessarily in the way we are currently doing things. "Implementing continuous school improvement first requires challenging traditional mindsets and behaviors to accept and embrace the mindsets and behaviors consistent with those of continuous improvement at the individual, classroom, workgroup, building or corporation level." * The superintendent can help create an environment that allows individuals or groups to challenge those traditional mindsets without fear of reprisal. He or she is in a position to balance the challenge with the necessary resources to implement a successful continuous improvement process. No district

regardless of size or wealth can afford to continually bring in an outside consultant to implement the continuous improvement process. It will live or die by the energies associated with those who have ownership in the process and accountability for the results. Superintendents can encourage and motivate ownership and accountability both internally and externally.

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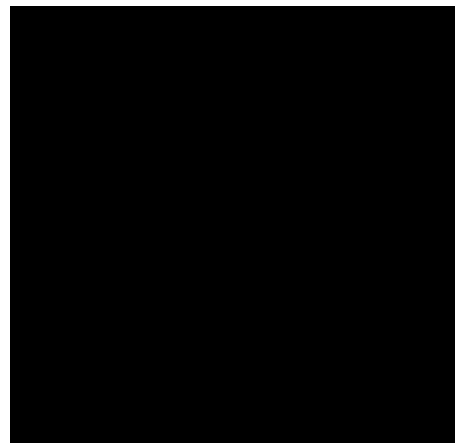


IPLA Alumni Message

“School in many districts are having a difficult time finding highly qualified people to serve as school principals.”

Education World

The IPLA Alumni Association feels so strongly about the need to enhance the leader pool among Indiana’s public schools that it has made a commitment to annually sponsor aspiring public school principals in the pursuit of their academic preparation. The Association currently provides a scholarship to three aspiring principals involved in an Indiana administrative preparation program. Recipients are reimbursed for up to \$1,000 of tuition and text-book purchases for two successive academic school years, with the total scholarship of \$2,000. To date, \$21,000 in scholarships have been awarded by the Association. If you know of an outstanding aspiring principal currently enrolled in a preparation program, please encourage them to apply in October, 2001 on the IPLA web site (www.doe.state.in.us/ipla).



From left to right: **Irene Eskridge**, Chairman, IPLA Scholarship Committee and scholarship winners **Kent Davis**, **Sharon Downing**, and **Phil Lederach**.

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The purpose of IndianaNEXT is to help superintendents and principals understand the power of technology to support systemic change in their schools and districts.

By becoming one of the 1200 administrators in the State to join this dynamic five-day educational program (beginning June 12-13 in Lebanon or August 1-2, 2001 in Indianapolis) you will:

Learn About

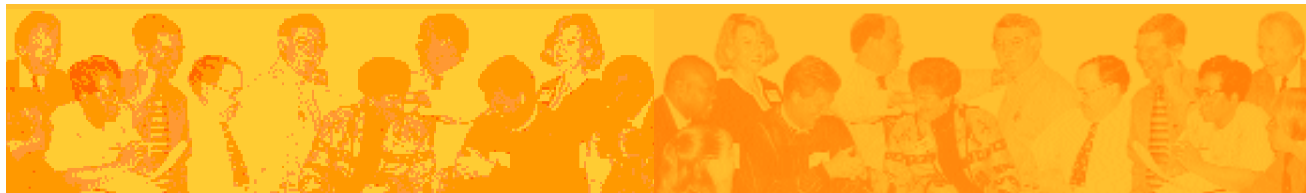
Issues Related to School Improvement
Role of Technology in P.L. 221
Leadership and Technology Resources
21st Century Skills
enGauge Framework for Effective Technology Use

Benefit From

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Networking Opportunities
Follow-Up Support
Hands-on Technology Training
\$1500 Grant to Support Individual Goal Action Plan
Graduate Credit or CRUs

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Double Duty Educator

By John Newton, Assistant Principal & School Board Member

The experience of working in the role of the administrator while also providing leadership in my community as a school board member many times causes double vision. For many years I have worked in the educational field in various positions, but the most interesting position has been my current situation. At present, I am the Assistant Principal of Student Services at Carmel High School in Carmel, Indiana, and I am also a first term

School Board member in MSD Pike Township in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Leadership in the world that I live in can have different focuses and views depending on which role or glasses that are being worn.

“I believe that there is a need for educators to become more involved with the total educational process.”

The focus of a high school administrator is centered with and around a particular school building while on the other hand the school board member's focus must encompass all the school buildings in the community district. Working in one community and living in another has provided a nurturing situation that helps enhance and improve both areas of leadership. I feel that I bring a fresh perspective to each job that allows me to analyze and seek a more rounded solution to problems. My decisions, in regards to both roles, have been strengthened and tend to be more collaborative because my “double vision” allows me to utilize resources and information that others are not afforded.

Although I must know when to separate my duties, I also must know when to combine them. Whether I am operating a school, evaluating school operations, or establish policy, I know that my first interest is the betterment of the students that I serve. As an educator, it is my goal to continuously improve and strengthen my leadership skills. By becoming a leader in two arenas, I have created a rewarding and challenging experience for myself.

As I stop to share this information, I realize that despite your current role or roles, the most important issue is to make a difference in the lives of young people. I believe that there is a need for educators to become more involved with the total educational process. My career, my children at home, and the youth that I work with have all benefitted because of my choice.

School Improvement Plans that Work

According to Joan Richardson, in a recently published article for the National Staff Development Council entitled “Support System: School Improvement Plans Work Best When Staff Learning is Included” there are several steps that principals can take to ensure that a school improvement plan works.

- Begin by focusing on a single content area.
- Identify and know the state and district standards.
- Collect data.
- Instead of broadly examining the data, complete an item analysis to clarify specific needs.
- Link student needs to teacher professional development.
- Have teachers examine the goals and assessments for their own students.
- When planning for school improvement there are also some key questions to consider to guide you through the school improvement process.
- What do students need to learn and be able to do?
- What do teachers need to learn and be able to do?
- What is the best way for teachers to learn this?
- How will we know if teachers are using what they have learned?
- What is the impact of this new knowledge and skills on students?

To view this entire article, please visit the following address on the NSDC web site: <http://www.nsd.org/library/tools/tools12-00rich.html>

Quote Corner

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

Winston Churchill

P.L. 221: Creating a School Improvement Team

(Continued from page 1)

Once the committee establishes the goals, it is mandatory that this committee comprehends the need for staff development and designs a three-year plan to support them. Also, the committee will be responsible for conducting an annual review of the school's academic performance. As part of this process they will modify the plan if necessary to ensure continual improvement.

The strength of P.L. 221 will be realized when the building principal creates the environment in which all committee members work together to successfully meet the challenges listed above. Meeting the requirements of this law will allow the principal to consider diverse opinions as decisions are made regarding the operation of the school. Building principals will enhance their leadership skills as they implement strategies to ensure all stakeholders take ownership in the school improvement process. When members of the community realize that their input is valued, school leaders may uncover additional sources of support. The major outcome of this process will occur when data indicates that student learning is continually improving, teachers create learning communities, and the public considers educational spending an investment, not an expense.

FIND IT HERE!

State Aims and Goals
Implementation Time Line
Progress Report
Statutory Language
Approved Rules for School Improvement Plan
Proposed Rule for Professional Development Grant Program
Professional Development Grant Template

How are Principals Supported with P.L. 221?

(Continued from page 3)

If we are to get at the heart of continuous improvement it will require a cultural change. A change in the way we communicate, set priorities and allocate resources. Schools will need to become vessels of free flowing thought and information not bound by classrooms or buildings. We can no longer hold our cards close to our chest, but must share our hand with the other players and learn from each other. Superintendents are in a position to influence the culture within the system and must be willing to learn and develop both their personal and the corporation's internal capability to manage change and the continuous improvement process.

(* Timothy Juergensen, *Continuous Improvement in Education*, The Juergensen Consulting Group, Inc. Indianapolis, Indiana.)

Technology Tip



In order to view IPLA Live! episodes about P.L. 221 and other documents that require a video player your computer must have Real Player installed. If you currently do not have Real Player, now is the time to download it from the Internet for free. Easy step-by-step instructions can be found on the IPLA web site. Simply follow these steps and you are on your way to view IPLA Live! the minute it airs.

- Go to www.doe.state.in.us/ipla
- Chose IPLA Live! from the menu bar on the left.
- In the middle of the screen, under the red words "Special Note" chose the blue words that say "Download and Installation".
- Print the instructions so that you may follow along as you complete the remaining steps.
- Simply follow the directions as you see them. If you run into trouble talk to you school tech support person.

The whole process should take less than 15 minutes to complete. Don't let new technology stand in your way to becoming a more informed Indiana principal!



Schools and Data: The Educator's Guide for Using Data to Improve Decision Making

by Theodore B. Creighton

Schools and Data focuses on the relevance of statistics in the day-to-day lives of principals and teachers. Key areas of exploration include:

- The role of statistics in the lives of principals and teachers
- An overview of data with real-life examples
- Step-by-Step procedures for collecting and organizing data
- Statistical methods for interpreting data
- Spotting and understanding relationships

This is an essential resource for any educator who wants to break through the statistical confusion to improve skills in problem analysis, program evaluation, data-driven decision making, and report preparation

Going Public: Priorities & Practices at the Manhattan New School

by Shelley Harwayne

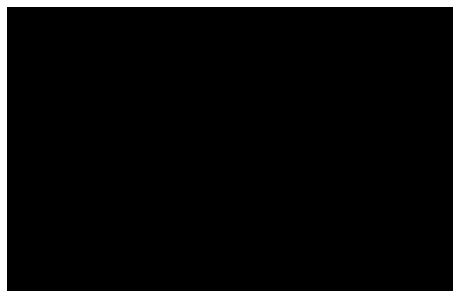
How do you create a public school, for a diverse population of children, that is rigorous, nurturing, joyfully literate, and successful by many standards? At the Manhattan New School, Shelley Harwayne has accomplished all this and more. In *Going Public*, she reveals what happens when she, a

literacy expert, accepted the role of principal at a New York City public school and attempted to live up to the words, "Practice what you preach." Teachers, administrators, parents, and staff developers will find *Going Public* an invaluable guide to creating a school committed to the very best public education has to offer.

Where in the World Is IPLA?



The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy has far reaching effects. How far, is the question. IPLA is nationally recognized for its efforts in the leadership field but now IPLA can be recognized for all to see. Have you seen IPLA somewhere in the world? If so, send us your photos today to Becca Lamon at IPLA, Department of Education, Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2798.



IPLA staff member, **Cynthia Stepp**, and husband, Benny, helped to support IPLA on their Caribbean cruise to Grand Cayman and Cozumel. Even on vacation, Cynthia is not far from work.

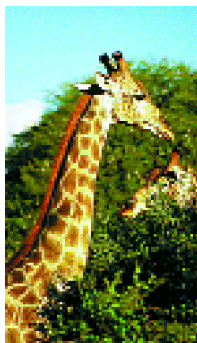


Colleen Moran (IPLA Associate Director) **Don Gilroy** (DOE Internet Consultant) and **Deb Lecklider** (IPLA Executive Director) highlighted IPLA Live! this March at the NASSP conference in Phoenix, AZ.

Results: The Key to Continuous School Improvement

by Mike Schmoker

The second edition of this book offers readers new information about cooperative learning, direct instruction, standards and assessments, and research and development. You will also find new information about action research and other effective staff development initiatives. If you liked the first edition, you will love the second edition. Pick up a copy today at your local book store or at Amazon.com.



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May 8 IPLA Live!

May 11 Alumni Board Meeting

June 12 IPLA Live!

June 13-14 Alumni Board Retreat

June 18-21 Summer Team Building 2001
Nashville, IN

June 24-27 Facilitator Training/
Curriculum Planning

July 10 IPLA Live!

August 14 IPLA Live!

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